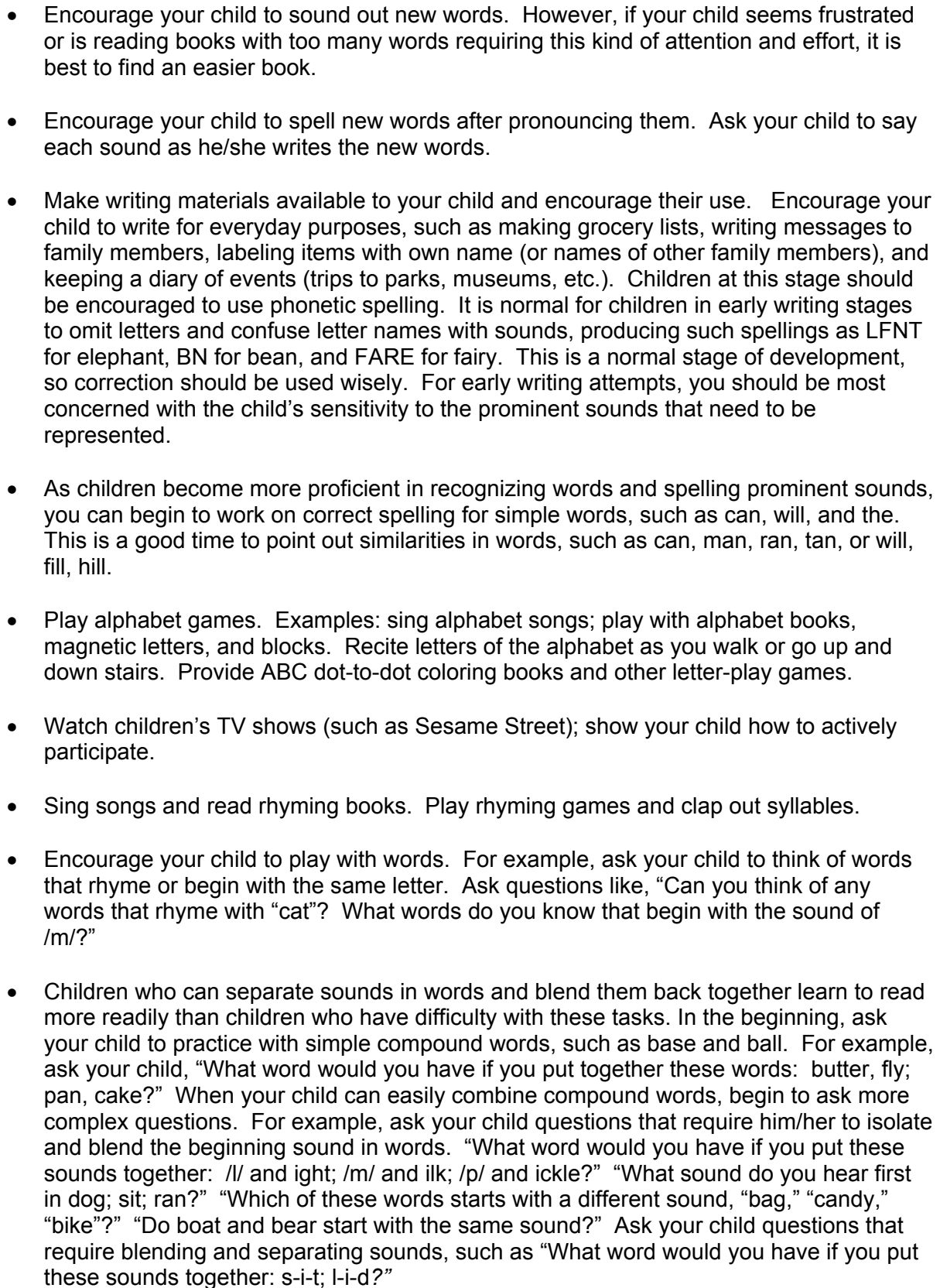


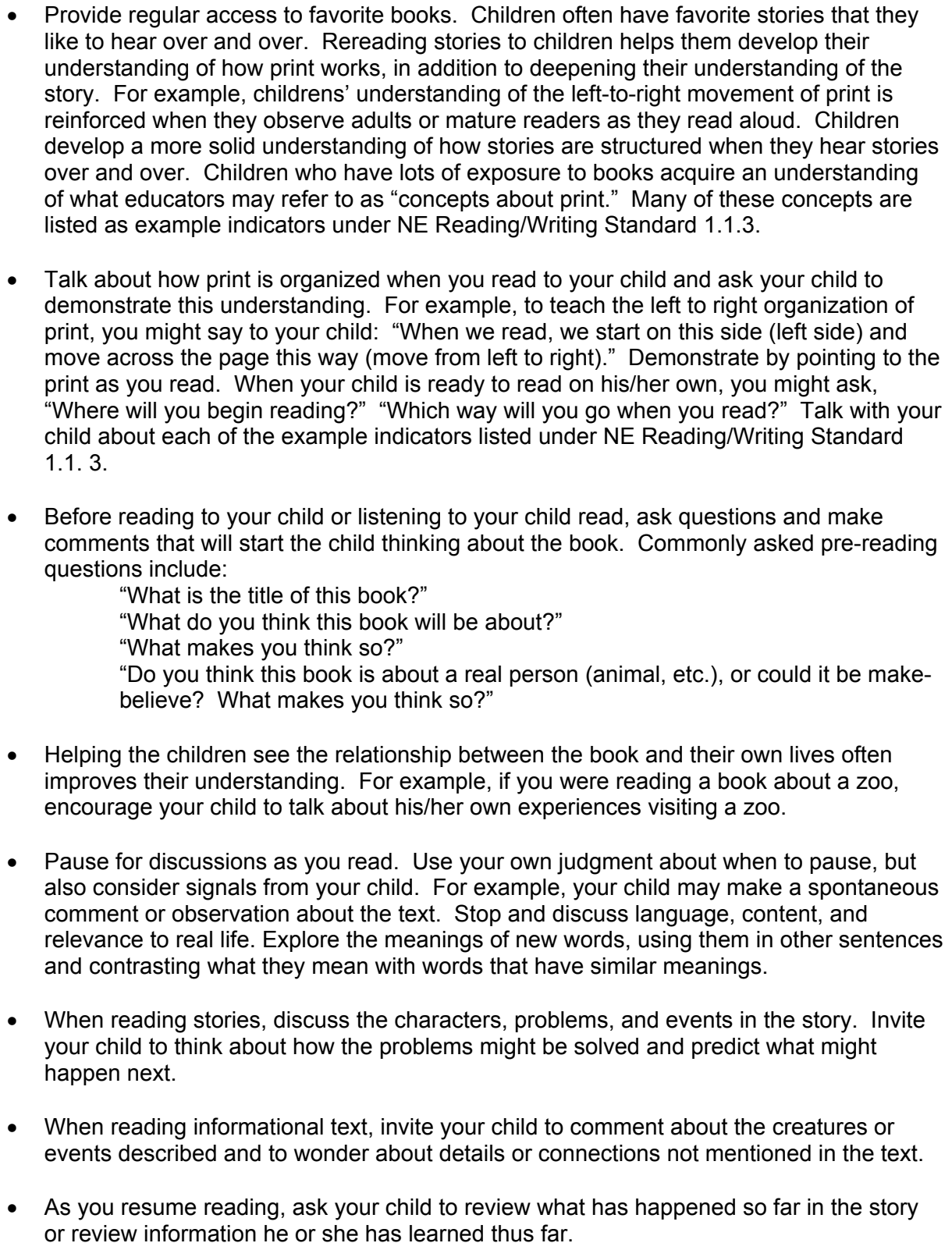


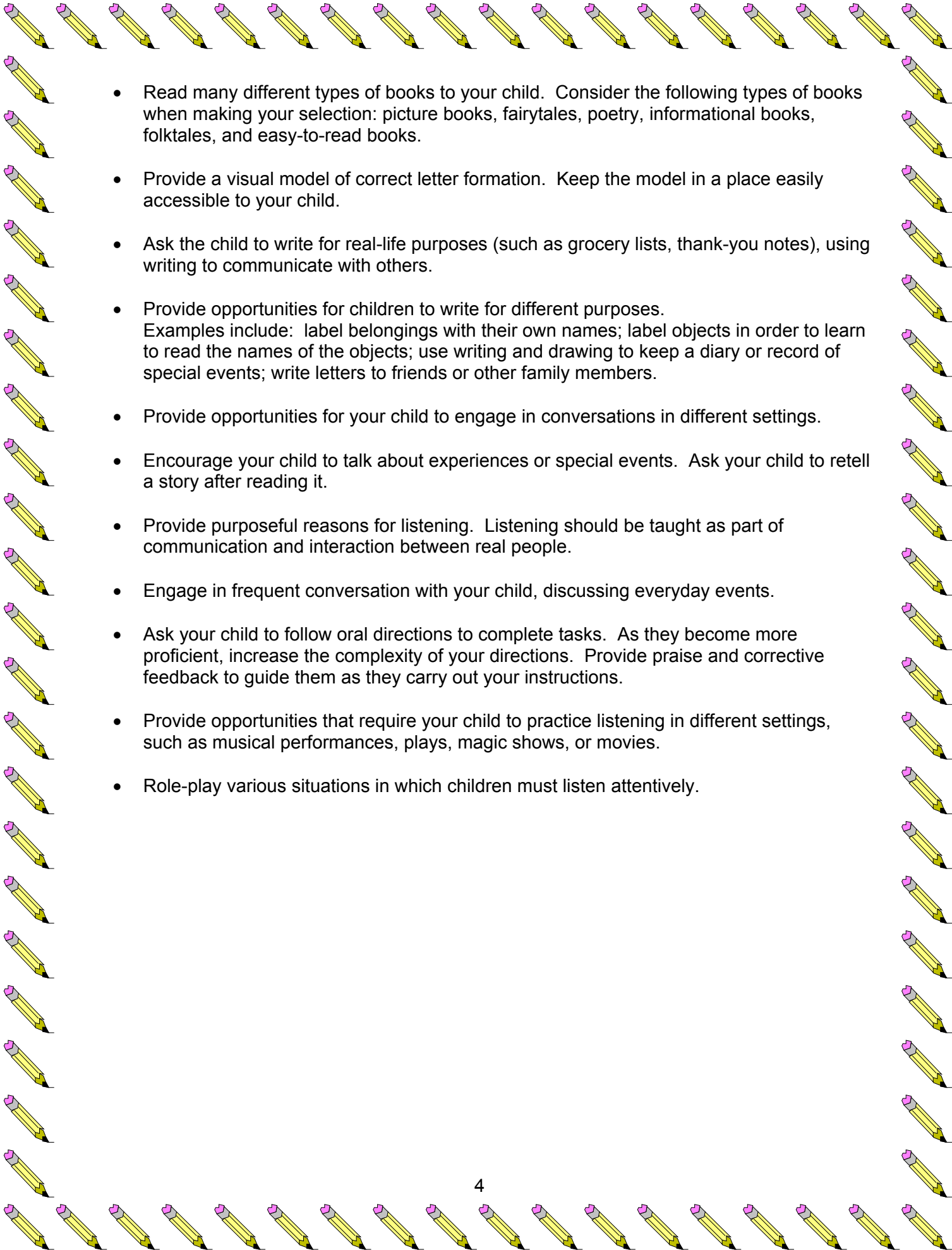
Nebraska Reading/Writing Standards Suggested Parent Activities

Grades K-1

- Read to your child frequently, allowing your child to look at the book with you as you read. Many parents have a regularly scheduled reading time with their children, such as after dinner or before bedtime. The focus of such read-aloud times should be on making reading a pleasurable activity for both the child and the adult, enjoying the story or information being shared. Enjoying shared reading experiences will provide children with opportunities to (a) increase vocabulary knowledge; (b) recognize some common sight words; (c) associate letters with the sounds they represent.
- Provide time and support for your child's attempts to read. It is likely that your child will benefit more from reading if you sit together, taking turns, and enjoying discussions about the book.
 - The pictures, rather than print, often govern children's early reading attempts. For example, your child may point to pictured objects, labeling and commenting about them. As children progress in their understanding of stories, they begin to look at pictures and tell stories that sound like oral language or storytelling. Eventually, your child may imitate the way you read a familiar book.
 - Children who have had lots of exposure to books usually begin to attend to print on their own. When your child begins to watch the print in books, provide books that use words that are easy to read. In the beginning, read with your child and invite him/her to read a few well-chosen words. Gradually, as your child becomes able, take turns reading words, sentences, paragraphs, and pages. At the end of each section or story, revisit words that caused trouble. Rereading the entire story over several days, and again weeks later, is a powerful way to reinforce this learning.
- Help your child read easy, enjoyable stories as often as possible. Your school or public librarian can help you select books at an appropriate level.
- Point out print that appears in your child's environment, and support attempts to read it. Examples of environmental print include labels on food products, store or street signs, words in newspapers or magazines, and grocery lists. Praise your child's attempts to make sense of print. You may point out features of the print that they accurately recognize, as well as features that they may have missed. For example, if a child correctly read the label on a can of peas, you might say, "You read that word! How did you know that said 'peas'?" If the child says, "I saw the picture," you might say, "That's right, but if the picture wasn't there, you could also read the letters. This word starts with the letter 'p' and 'p' stands for a /p/ sound."
- Point out new words. As you encounter new words, touch each letter and say the corresponding sound. Then blend the sounds to create the word. For example, say m-a-n and blend the sounds together to say "man."

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- Encourage your child to sound out new words. However, if your child seems frustrated or is reading books with too many words requiring this kind of attention and effort, it is best to find an easier book.
 - Encourage your child to spell new words after pronouncing them. Ask your child to say each sound as he/she writes the new words.
 - Make writing materials available to your child and encourage their use. Encourage your child to write for everyday purposes, such as making grocery lists, writing messages to family members, labeling items with own name (or names of other family members), and keeping a diary of events (trips to parks, museums, etc.). Children at this stage should be encouraged to use phonetic spelling. It is normal for children in early writing stages to omit letters and confuse letter names with sounds, producing such spellings as LFNT for elephant, BN for bean, and FARE for fairy. This is a normal stage of development, so correction should be used wisely. For early writing attempts, you should be most concerned with the child's sensitivity to the prominent sounds that need to be represented.
 - As children become more proficient in recognizing words and spelling prominent sounds, you can begin to work on correct spelling for simple words, such as can, will, and the. This is a good time to point out similarities in words, such as can, man, ran, tan, or will, fill, hill.
 - Play alphabet games. Examples: sing alphabet songs; play with alphabet books, magnetic letters, and blocks. Recite letters of the alphabet as you walk or go up and down stairs. Provide ABC dot-to-dot coloring books and other letter-play games.
 - Watch children's TV shows (such as Sesame Street); show your child how to actively participate.
 - Sing songs and read rhyming books. Play rhyming games and clap out syllables.
 - Encourage your child to play with words. For example, ask your child to think of words that rhyme or begin with the same letter. Ask questions like, "Can you think of any words that rhyme with "cat"? What words do you know that begin with the sound of /m/?"
 - Children who can separate sounds in words and blend them back together learn to read more readily than children who have difficulty with these tasks. In the beginning, ask your child to practice with simple compound words, such as base and ball. For example, ask your child, "What word would you have if you put together these words: butter, fly; pan, cake?" When your child can easily combine compound words, begin to ask more complex questions. For example, ask your child questions that require him/her to isolate and blend the beginning sound in words. "What word would you have if you put these sounds together: /l/ and ight; /m/ and ilk; /p/ and ickle?" "What sound do you hear first in dog; sit; ran?" "Which of these words starts with a different sound, "bag," "candy," "bike"?" "Do boat and bear start with the same sound?" Ask your child questions that require blending and separating sounds, such as "What word would you have if you put these sounds together: s-i-t; l-i-d?"

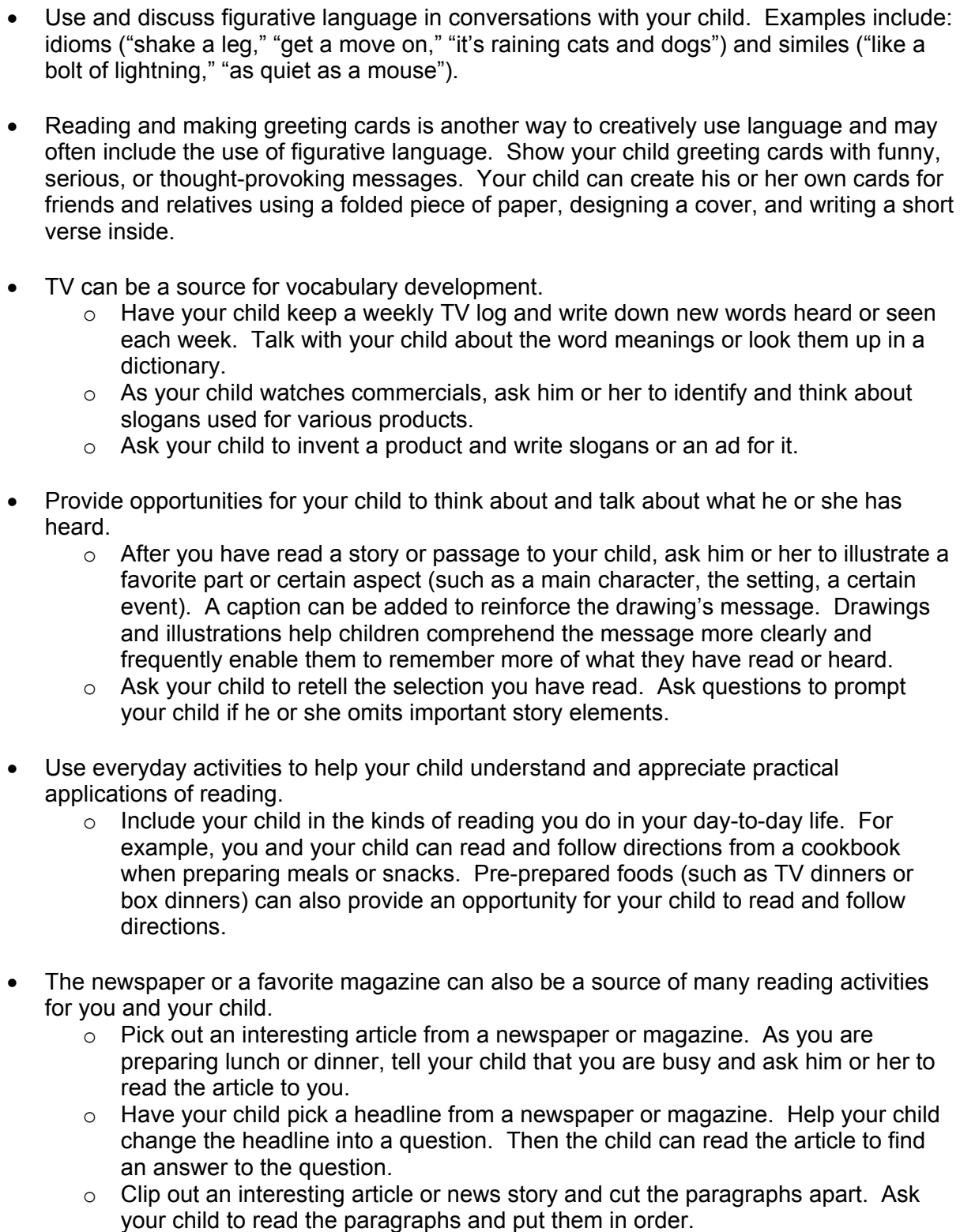
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- Provide regular access to favorite books. Children often have favorite stories that they like to hear over and over. Rereading stories to children helps them develop their understanding of how print works, in addition to deepening their understanding of the story. For example, childrens' understanding of the left-to-right movement of print is reinforced when they observe adults or mature readers as they read aloud. Children develop a more solid understanding of how stories are structured when they hear stories over and over. Children who have lots of exposure to books acquire an understanding of what educators may refer to as "concepts about print." Many of these concepts are listed as example indicators under NE Reading/Writing Standard 1.1.3.
 - Talk about how print is organized when you read to your child and ask your child to demonstrate this understanding. For example, to teach the left to right organization of print, you might say to your child: "When we read, we start on this side (left side) and move across the page this way (move from left to right)." Demonstrate by pointing to the print as you read. When your child is ready to read on his/her own, you might ask, "Where will you begin reading?" "Which way will you go when you read?" Talk with your child about each of the example indicators listed under NE Reading/Writing Standard 1.1. 3.
 - Before reading to your child or listening to your child read, ask questions and make comments that will start the child thinking about the book. Commonly asked pre-reading questions include:
 - "What is the title of this book?"
 - "What do you think this book will be about?"
 - "What makes you think so?"
 - "Do you think this book is about a real person (animal, etc.), or could it be make-believe? What makes you think so?"
 - Helping the children see the relationship between the book and their own lives often improves their understanding. For example, if you were reading a book about a zoo, encourage your child to talk about his/her own experiences visiting a zoo.
 - Pause for discussions as you read. Use your own judgment about when to pause, but also consider signals from your child. For example, your child may make a spontaneous comment or observation about the text. Stop and discuss language, content, and relevance to real life. Explore the meanings of new words, using them in other sentences and contrasting what they mean with words that have similar meanings.
 - When reading stories, discuss the characters, problems, and events in the story. Invite your child to think about how the problems might be solved and predict what might happen next.
 - When reading informational text, invite your child to comment about the creatures or events described and to wonder about details or connections not mentioned in the text.
 - As you resume reading, ask your child to review what has happened so far in the story or review information he or she has learned thus far.

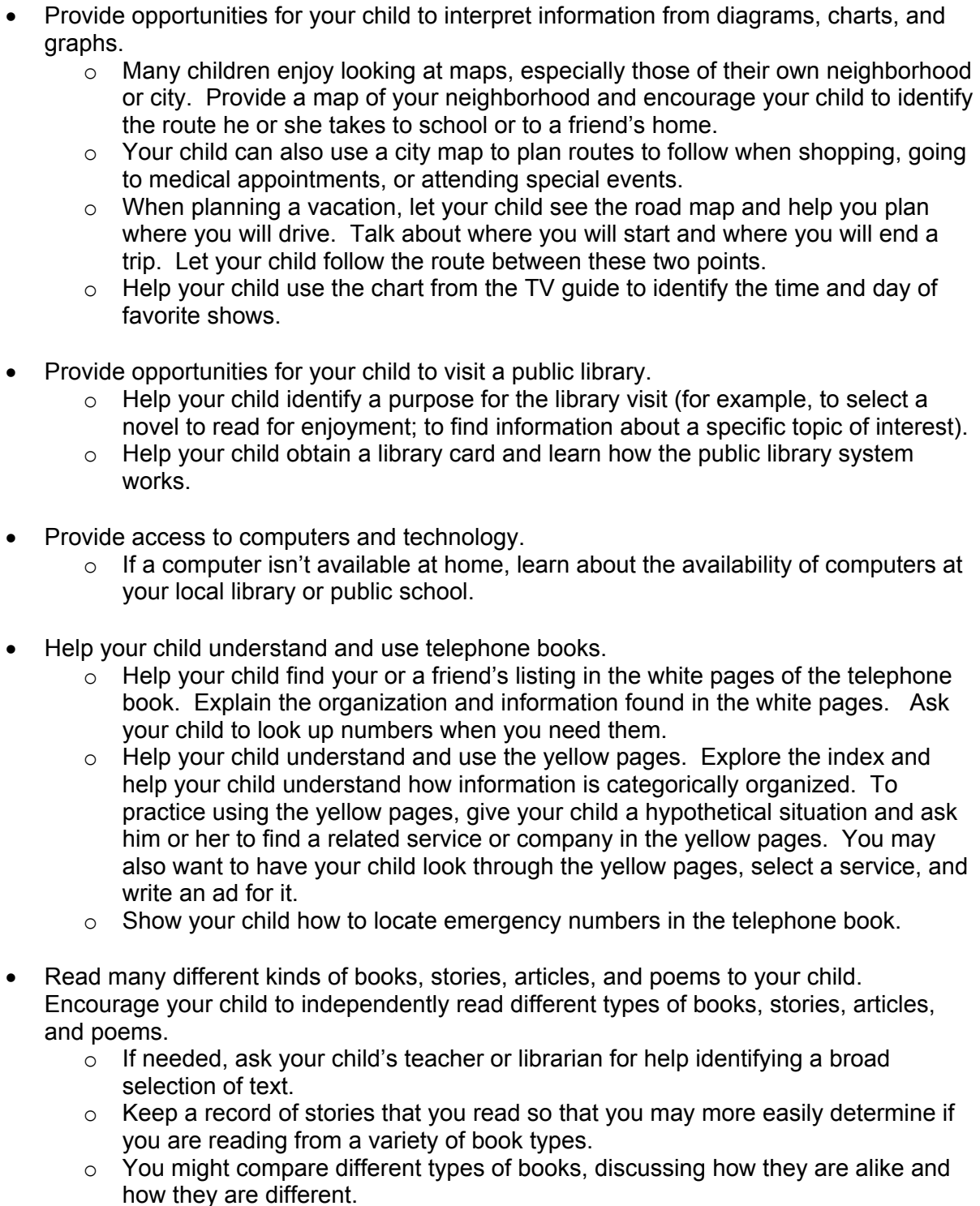
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- Read many different types of books to your child. Consider the following types of books when making your selection: picture books, fairytales, poetry, informational books, folktales, and easy-to-read books.
 - Provide a visual model of correct letter formation. Keep the model in a place easily accessible to your child.
 - Ask the child to write for real-life purposes (such as grocery lists, thank-you notes), using writing to communicate with others.
 - Provide opportunities for children to write for different purposes. Examples include: label belongings with their own names; label objects in order to learn to read the names of the objects; use writing and drawing to keep a diary or record of special events; write letters to friends or other family members.
 - Provide opportunities for your child to engage in conversations in different settings.
 - Encourage your child to talk about experiences or special events. Ask your child to retell a story after reading it.
 - Provide purposeful reasons for listening. Listening should be taught as part of communication and interaction between real people.
 - Engage in frequent conversation with your child, discussing everyday events.
 - Ask your child to follow oral directions to complete tasks. As they become more proficient, increase the complexity of your directions. Provide praise and corrective feedback to guide them as they carry out your instructions.
 - Provide opportunities that require your child to practice listening in different settings, such as musical performances, plays, magic shows, or movies.
 - Role-play various situations in which children must listen attentively.

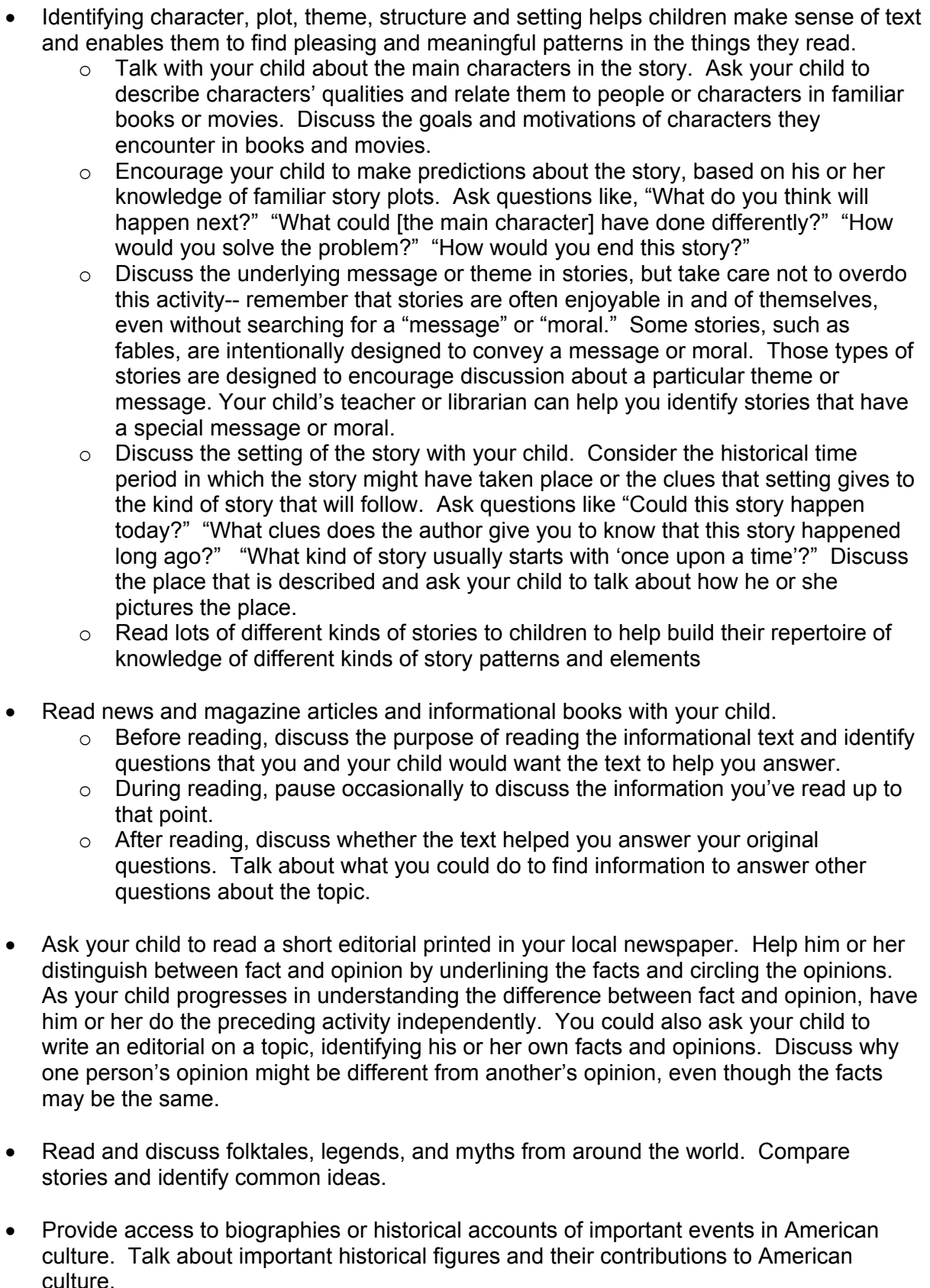


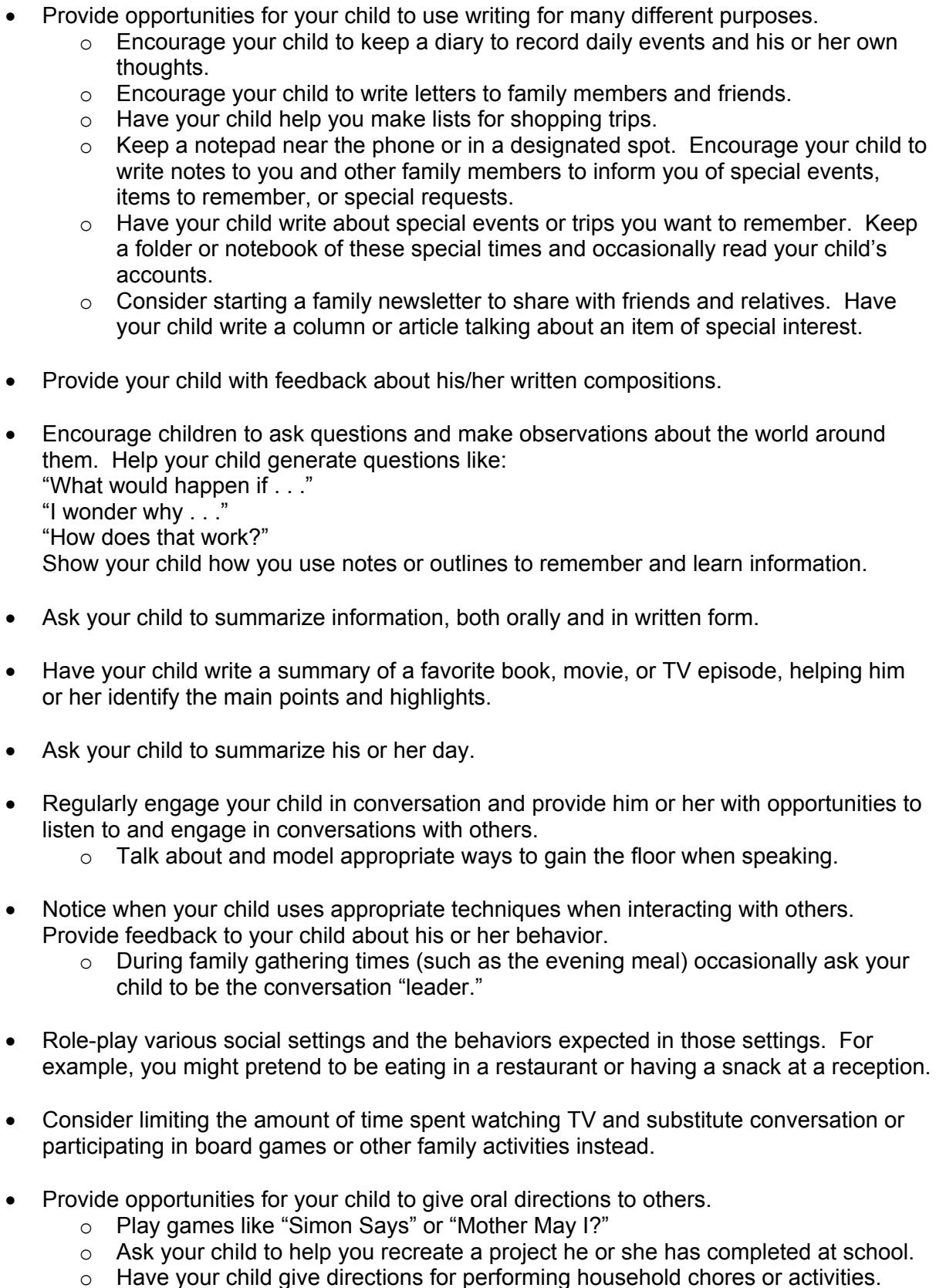
Grades 2-4

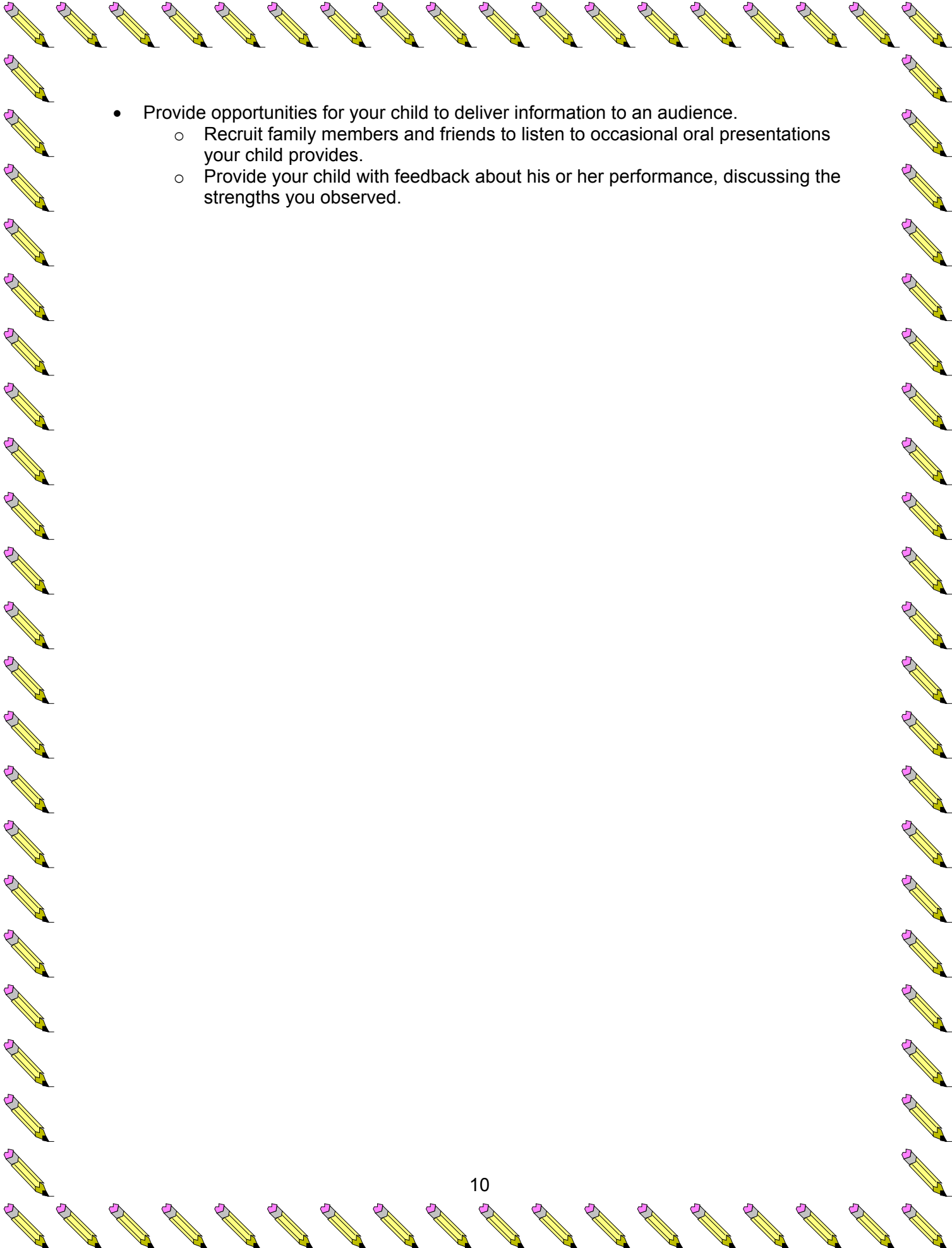
- Read aloud to your child on a regular basis.
 - Consider reading a chapter a night before your child goes to bed. Children enjoy listening to a good story, and reading stories just beyond their own independent reading levels is a good way to help your child improve vocabulary knowledge and comprehension.
 - Reading many different types of text will expose your child to new vocabulary and sentence structures. This will help your child comprehend different types of stories and articles he/she will encounter both in and out of school.
- Many children in elementary grades will benefit from closely examining words and word patterns. Children may not see these patterns on their own and may not realize how the structure or spelling of a word can be a direct clue to learning and remembering word meanings. Reading materials already in the home can be used to provide practice activities for children and help them make the connection from the classroom to the real world. Some sample activities are provided below.
 - Challenge children to go on “word hunts” in which they look for words with the same features. Word hunts can be conducted on any kind of printed materials available at home, such as newspapers, magazines, and cookbooks. For example, you can ask your child to look for words that end in the suffix “ful” in today’s newspaper or challenge your child to see how many words he/she can find with the “ai” spelling pattern.
 - Encourage your child to keep a personal dictionary. Children can develop their own dictionaries of new words or words with similar patterns by recording words in a notebook.
 - Talk about new words and point out new words or distinguishing features of words as you encounter them.
- Provide time and encouragement for your child to read independently.
 - Provide access to books your child can independently read.
 - Consult with your child’s teacher or librarian if you need help selecting books.
- As children read, encourage them to mark unknown words. Using a homemade bookmark is a convenient way to encourage children to identify unknown words for later discussion. Using lightweight pieces of cardboard and construction paper, children can write the name of the book on one side and keep a running list of new words on the other. The bookmarks provide a record both of the books the child has read and all the new words he or she has encountered. After reading or studying, you and your child can go back and discuss the new words that were identified. Your discussion could include aspects such as: (a) different parts of the word (prefix, root, suffix) and the possible meanings of the word parts; (b) rereading the sentences around the word to understand how the word is used; (c) using a dictionary to find multiple meanings of the word; (d) using a dictionary to discover the origin of the word and discussing how the word origin relates to present-day meaning; (e) thinking of other words with similar spellings or meanings. Children can also make their own personal dictionaries in which they write new words, their meanings, and words with similar spellings or meanings.
- Ask your child’s teacher for help identifying common word parts (prefixes, roots, suffixes) and meanings that your child should know.

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- Use and discuss figurative language in conversations with your child. Examples include: idioms (“shake a leg,” “get a move on,” “it’s raining cats and dogs”) and similes (“like a bolt of lightning,” “as quiet as a mouse”).
 - Reading and making greeting cards is another way to creatively use language and may often include the use of figurative language. Show your child greeting cards with funny, serious, or thought-provoking messages. Your child can create his or her own cards for friends and relatives using a folded piece of paper, designing a cover, and writing a short verse inside.
 - TV can be a source for vocabulary development.
 - Have your child keep a weekly TV log and write down new words heard or seen each week. Talk with your child about the word meanings or look them up in a dictionary.
 - As your child watches commercials, ask him or her to identify and think about slogans used for various products.
 - Ask your child to invent a product and write slogans or an ad for it.
 - Provide opportunities for your child to think about and talk about what he or she has heard.
 - After you have read a story or passage to your child, ask him or her to illustrate a favorite part or certain aspect (such as a main character, the setting, a certain event). A caption can be added to reinforce the drawing’s message. Drawings and illustrations help children comprehend the message more clearly and frequently enable them to remember more of what they have read or heard.
 - Ask your child to retell the selection you have read. Ask questions to prompt your child if he or she omits important story elements.
 - Use everyday activities to help your child understand and appreciate practical applications of reading.
 - Include your child in the kinds of reading you do in your day-to-day life. For example, you and your child can read and follow directions from a cookbook when preparing meals or snacks. Pre-prepared foods (such as TV dinners or box dinners) can also provide an opportunity for your child to read and follow directions.
 - The newspaper or a favorite magazine can also be a source of many reading activities for you and your child.
 - Pick out an interesting article from a newspaper or magazine. As you are preparing lunch or dinner, tell your child that you are busy and ask him or her to read the article to you.
 - Have your child pick a headline from a newspaper or magazine. Help your child change the headline into a question. Then the child can read the article to find an answer to the question.
 - Clip out an interesting article or news story and cut the paragraphs apart. Ask your child to read the paragraphs and put them in order.

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- Provide opportunities for your child to interpret information from diagrams, charts, and graphs.
 - Many children enjoy looking at maps, especially those of their own neighborhood or city. Provide a map of your neighborhood and encourage your child to identify the route he or she takes to school or to a friend's home.
 - Your child can also use a city map to plan routes to follow when shopping, going to medical appointments, or attending special events.
 - When planning a vacation, let your child see the road map and help you plan where you will drive. Talk about where you will start and where you will end a trip. Let your child follow the route between these two points.
 - Help your child use the chart from the TV guide to identify the time and day of favorite shows.
 - Provide opportunities for your child to visit a public library.
 - Help your child identify a purpose for the library visit (for example, to select a novel to read for enjoyment; to find information about a specific topic of interest).
 - Help your child obtain a library card and learn how the public library system works.
 - Provide access to computers and technology.
 - If a computer isn't available at home, learn about the availability of computers at your local library or public school.
 - Help your child understand and use telephone books.
 - Help your child find your or a friend's listing in the white pages of the telephone book. Explain the organization and information found in the white pages. Ask your child to look up numbers when you need them.
 - Help your child understand and use the yellow pages. Explore the index and help your child understand how information is categorically organized. To practice using the yellow pages, give your child a hypothetical situation and ask him or her to find a related service or company in the yellow pages. You may also want to have your child look through the yellow pages, select a service, and write an ad for it.
 - Show your child how to locate emergency numbers in the telephone book.
 - Read many different kinds of books, stories, articles, and poems to your child. Encourage your child to independently read different types of books, stories, articles, and poems.
 - If needed, ask your child's teacher or librarian for help identifying a broad selection of text.
 - Keep a record of stories that you read so that you may more easily determine if you are reading from a variety of book types.
 - You might compare different types of books, discussing how they are alike and how they are different.

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- Identifying character, plot, theme, structure and setting helps children make sense of text and enables them to find pleasing and meaningful patterns in the things they read.
 - Talk with your child about the main characters in the story. Ask your child to describe characters' qualities and relate them to people or characters in familiar books or movies. Discuss the goals and motivations of characters they encounter in books and movies.
 - Encourage your child to make predictions about the story, based on his or her knowledge of familiar story plots. Ask questions like, "What do you think will happen next?" "What could [the main character] have done differently?" "How would you solve the problem?" "How would you end this story?"
 - Discuss the underlying message or theme in stories, but take care not to overdo this activity-- remember that stories are often enjoyable in and of themselves, even without searching for a "message" or "moral." Some stories, such as fables, are intentionally designed to convey a message or moral. Those types of stories are designed to encourage discussion about a particular theme or message. Your child's teacher or librarian can help you identify stories that have a special message or moral.
 - Discuss the setting of the story with your child. Consider the historical time period in which the story might have taken place or the clues that setting gives to the kind of story that will follow. Ask questions like "Could this story happen today?" "What clues does the author give you to know that this story happened long ago?" "What kind of story usually starts with 'once upon a time'?" Discuss the place that is described and ask your child to talk about how he or she pictures the place.
 - Read lots of different kinds of stories to children to help build their repertoire of knowledge of different kinds of story patterns and elements
 - Read news and magazine articles and informational books with your child.
 - Before reading, discuss the purpose of reading the informational text and identify questions that you and your child would want the text to help you answer.
 - During reading, pause occasionally to discuss the information you've read up to that point.
 - After reading, discuss whether the text helped you answer your original questions. Talk about what you could do to find information to answer other questions about the topic.
 - Ask your child to read a short editorial printed in your local newspaper. Help him or her distinguish between fact and opinion by underlining the facts and circling the opinions. As your child progresses in understanding the difference between fact and opinion, have him or her do the preceding activity independently. You could also ask your child to write an editorial on a topic, identifying his or her own facts and opinions. Discuss why one person's opinion might be different from another's opinion, even though the facts may be the same.
 - Read and discuss folktales, legends, and myths from around the world. Compare stories and identify common ideas.
 - Provide access to biographies or historical accounts of important events in American culture. Talk about important historical figures and their contributions to American culture.

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- Provide opportunities for your child to use writing for many different purposes.
 - Encourage your child to keep a diary to record daily events and his or her own thoughts.
 - Encourage your child to write letters to family members and friends.
 - Have your child help you make lists for shopping trips.
 - Keep a notepad near the phone or in a designated spot. Encourage your child to write notes to you and other family members to inform you of special events, items to remember, or special requests.
 - Have your child write about special events or trips you want to remember. Keep a folder or notebook of these special times and occasionally read your child's accounts.
 - Consider starting a family newsletter to share with friends and relatives. Have your child write a column or article talking about an item of special interest.
 - Provide your child with feedback about his/her written compositions.
 - Encourage children to ask questions and make observations about the world around them. Help your child generate questions like:
"What would happen if . . ."
"I wonder why . . ."
"How does that work?"
Show your child how you use notes or outlines to remember and learn information.
 - Ask your child to summarize information, both orally and in written form.
 - Have your child write a summary of a favorite book, movie, or TV episode, helping him or her identify the main points and highlights.
 - Ask your child to summarize his or her day.
 - Regularly engage your child in conversation and provide him or her with opportunities to listen to and engage in conversations with others.
 - Talk about and model appropriate ways to gain the floor when speaking.
 - Notice when your child uses appropriate techniques when interacting with others. Provide feedback to your child about his or her behavior.
 - During family gathering times (such as the evening meal) occasionally ask your child to be the conversation "leader."
 - Role-play various social settings and the behaviors expected in those settings. For example, you might pretend to be eating in a restaurant or having a snack at a reception.
 - Consider limiting the amount of time spent watching TV and substitute conversation or participating in board games or other family activities instead.
 - Provide opportunities for your child to give oral directions to others.
 - Play games like "Simon Says" or "Mother May I?"
 - Ask your child to help you recreate a project he or she has completed at school.
 - Have your child give directions for performing household chores or activities.

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- Provide opportunities for your child to deliver information to an audience.
 - Recruit family members and friends to listen to occasional oral presentations your child provides.
 - Provide your child with feedback about his or her performance, discussing the strengths you observed.



Grades 5-12

- Read aloud to your child on a regular basis. All children and young adults enjoy listening to a good story, and listening to stories read aloud is a great way to help your child improve vocabulary knowledge, comprehension skills, and listening skills. Listening to books read aloud also provides the listener with new information. It is a great way to learn more about ourselves and the world we live in.
- Provide time and encouragement for your child to read independently. Provide access to a variety of books and other written text. Spend time visiting your public library or a local bookstore together.
- Communicate with your child's teacher about his or her progress in the areas of reading and writing.
- Let your children see you reading and writing for a variety of purposes. Talk to your child about what you are reading and writing. Be a positive reading/writing role model!
- Provide access to computers and technology. If a computer isn't available at home, learn about the availability of computers at your local library or public school.
- Provide opportunities for your child to use writing for many different purposes.
 - Encourage your child to keep a journal to record daily events and his or her own thoughts.
 - Encourage your child to write thank-you notes and letters to family members and friends.
 - Have your child help you make lists for shopping trips.
 - Keep a notepad near the phone or in a designated spot. Encourage your child to write notes to you and other family members to inform others of special events, items to remember, or special requests.
 - Have your child write about special events or trips you want to remember. Keep a folder or notebook of these special times and occasionally read your child's accounts.
 - Consider starting a family newsletter to share with friends and relatives. Have your child write a column or article talking about an item of special interest.
- Regularly engage your child in conversation and provide him or her with opportunities to listen to and engage in conversations with others.
- Notice when your child uses appropriate speaking and listening techniques when interacting with others. Provide feedback to your child about his or her behavior.
- Consider limiting the amount of time spent watching TV and substitute conversation or participating in board games or other family activities instead.